

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 were examined. Claims 1 and 10 are amended. Claims 1-17 remain in the Application.

The Patent Office objects to the specification. The Patent Office rejects claims 1-17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

A. Objection to Specification

The Patent Office objects to the specification, because the initial paragraph that refers to the parent application should refer to that application by the patent number. Applicant amends the noted paragraph to address the concern raised by the Patent Office. Applicant respectfully requests that the Patent Office withdraw the objection to the specification.

B. 35 U.S.C. §102: Rejection of Claims 1-17

The Patent Office rejects claims 1-17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,747,790 of Shimomura et al. (Shimomura).

Independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Shimomura, because Shimomura does not describe an apparatus comprising a plurality of devices formed on a substrate and in a process condition to be singulated, and a masking material overlying a portion of the scribe line area separating each of the plurality of devices. Shimomura teaches depositing a gap filler material in a scribe area of a substrate in which imaging devices are formed. Shimomura, however, teaches as a final processing step to remove the gap filler material. See column 20, lines 58-63. Thus, in a process condition to be singulated, the apparatus of Shimomura does not include the gap filler layer from the scribe area.

Claims 2-9 depend from claim 1 and therefore contain all the limitations of that claim. For at least the reasons stated with respect to claim 1, claims 2-9 are not anticipated by Shimomura.

Independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Shimomura, because Shimomura does not describe a wafer comprising a plurality of integrated circuits not on a surface of a wafer adjacent a scribe line area and in a process condition to be singulated and a masking material overlying a portion of a scribe line area. As noted above, in a process condition to be singulated, a wafer of Shimomura has the gap filler layer removed from a scribe line area.

Claims 11-17 depend from claim 10 and therefore contain all the limitations of that claim. For at least the reasons stated with respect to claim 10, claims 11-17 are not anticipated by Shimomura.

Applicant respectfully requests the Patent Office withdraw the rejection of claims 1-17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Nedy Calderon 11/5/04
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